



SEMS DocID 635556

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 1
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT DECISION RECORD

I. IDENTIFICATION	
01 STATE	02 SITE NUMBER
MA	D 981062045

II. SITE NAME AND LOCATION

01 SITE NAME (Legal, common, or descriptive name of site)		02 STREET, ROUTE NO., OR SPECIFIC LOCATION IDENTIFIER	
Rindge Towers Apts.		362-364 Rindge Ave.	
03 CITY	04 STATE	05 ZIP CODE	
Cambridge	MA	02138	

DRAFT PA: completed by ☒ FIT (F1-.8504.-12..)☐ State☐ EPA☐DRAFT PRIORITY ASSESSMENT/RECOMMENDATION FOR SITE INSPECTION
☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low ☐ None

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON DRAFT

a. STATE comments, dated, by

Summary

b. SITE OWNER comments, dated, by

Summary

c. EPA REGION 1 comments, dated, by

Summary

d. comments, dated, by

Summary

FINAL PA DECISION BY EPA PA COORDINATOR:

a. ☐ agree with draft.b. ☐ Revised draft. Reason

c. Final Priority Assessment/Recommendation for Site Inspection

☐ High ☒ Medium ☐ Low ☐ Noned. Final decision made by Susan C. Swinsky Date 9/24/85

**NUS CORPORATION
SUPERFUND DIVISION**

INTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

C-583-9-5-44

TO: DON SMITH

DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 1985

FROM: HERBERT W. COLBY HWC

COPIES: FILE

**SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE RINDGE TOWER APARTMENTS,
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS**
TDD No. F1-8504-12
Reference No. S300MA38PA

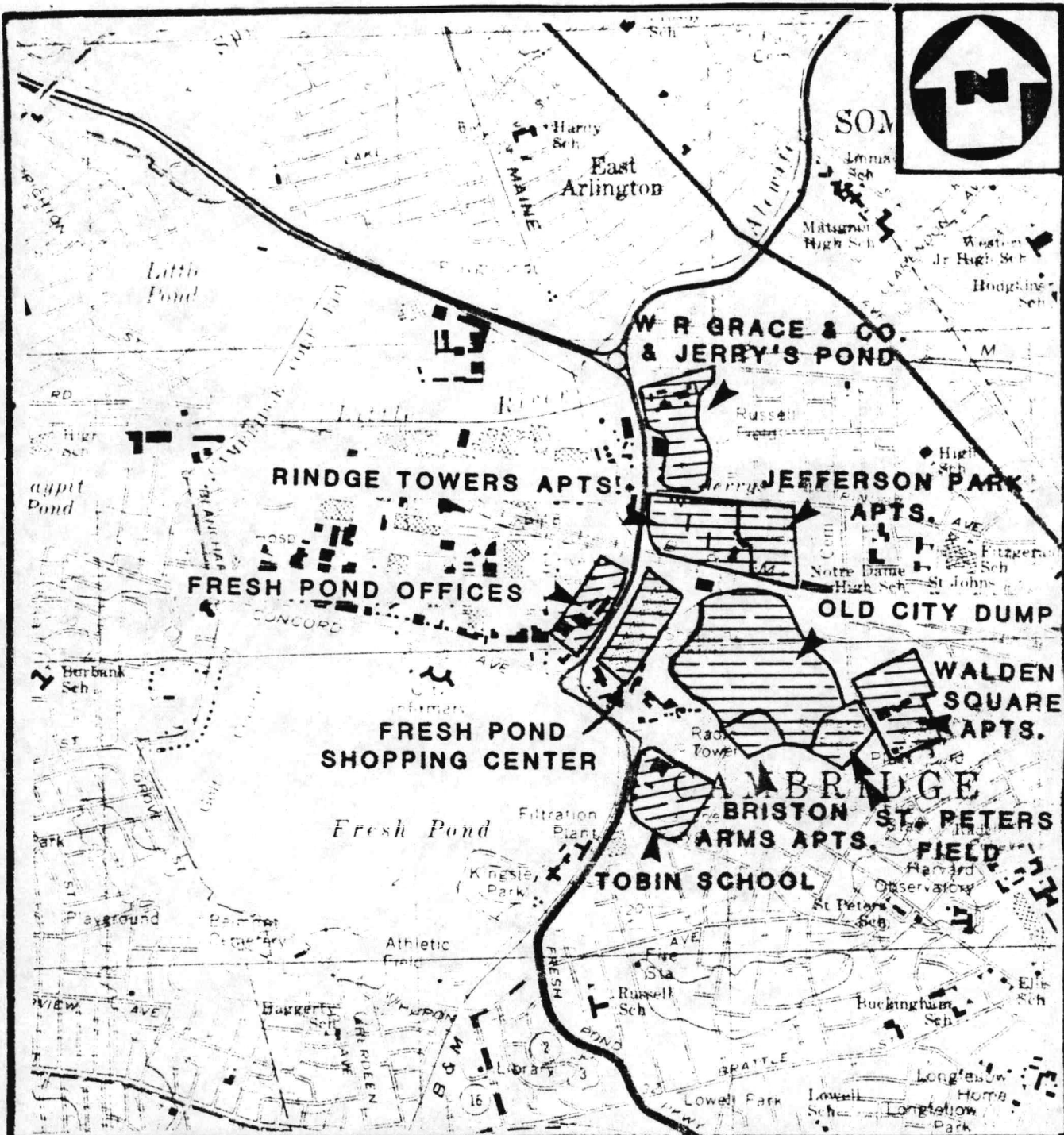
The NUS Field Investigation Team (NUS/FIT) was tasked by Region I U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund Branch to perform a preliminary assessment of the Rindge Tower Apartments on Rindge Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts, under Technical Directive Document (TDD) F1-8504-12 (Appendix A). This letter report fulfills the requirements of the task.

The documents prepared within comply with requirements set forth under EPA Superfund Legislation (CERCLA), however, they do not necessarily fulfill the requirements of other EPA regulations such as RCRA.

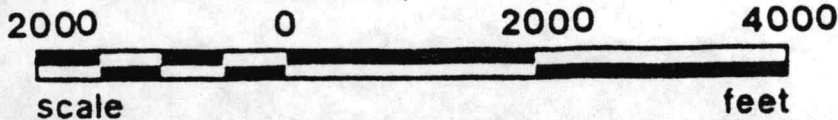
The Rindge Tower Apartments Site is located on the south side of Rindge Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the intersection of Rindge Avenue and Alewife Brook Parkway (Figure 1). The approximately 13 acre site contains three high-rise apartment buildings and associated parking lots. Two of the buildings (referred to as the Fresh Pond Apartments) are owned by Rindge Associates, c/o Federal Management Company, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts. The third and western-most building (Rindge Tower) is owned by Sherman Associates, 324 Rindge Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The site is bordered to the south by Boston and Maine railroad tracks, to the east by the Cambridge Housing Authority's Jefferson Park Apartments, to the north by residential housing and Rindge Avenue, and to the west by Alewife Brook Parkway. Jerry's Pond, on the W. R. Grace and Company Site, is located on the north side of Rindge Avenue, approximately 300 feet from the site. Fresh Pond Reservoir, which supplies water to approximately 102,000 residents of Cambridge, is located 2,200 feet to the south of the site. Alewife Brook is located 0.3 miles to the northwest, and flows northeast to the Mystic River, which drains into Boston Harbor. The North Cambridge/Fresh Pond area is heavily populated, with multiple and single family dwellings and high-rise and garden apartment complexes. In addition, there are a number of shopping centers, research offices and industries in the area.

Much of the North Cambridge area is underlain by extensive clay deposits. In the 1800's and early 1900's, these deposits were mined for the manufacture of bricks. The Rindge Tower Apartments Site overlies a historic excavation pit originally developed in the 1840's. The northern half of the site was apparently mined for clay until the early 1900's, at which time most on-site excavation ceased. Various brick manufacturing activities were performed on the southern



BASE MAP IS A PORTION OF THE U.S.G.S. LEXINGTON MA
QUADRANGLE [7.5' SERIES, 1971]



LOCUS PLAN
CAMBRIDGE CLAY PITS SITES
CAMBRIDGE MA

AUGUST 1985



FIGURE 1

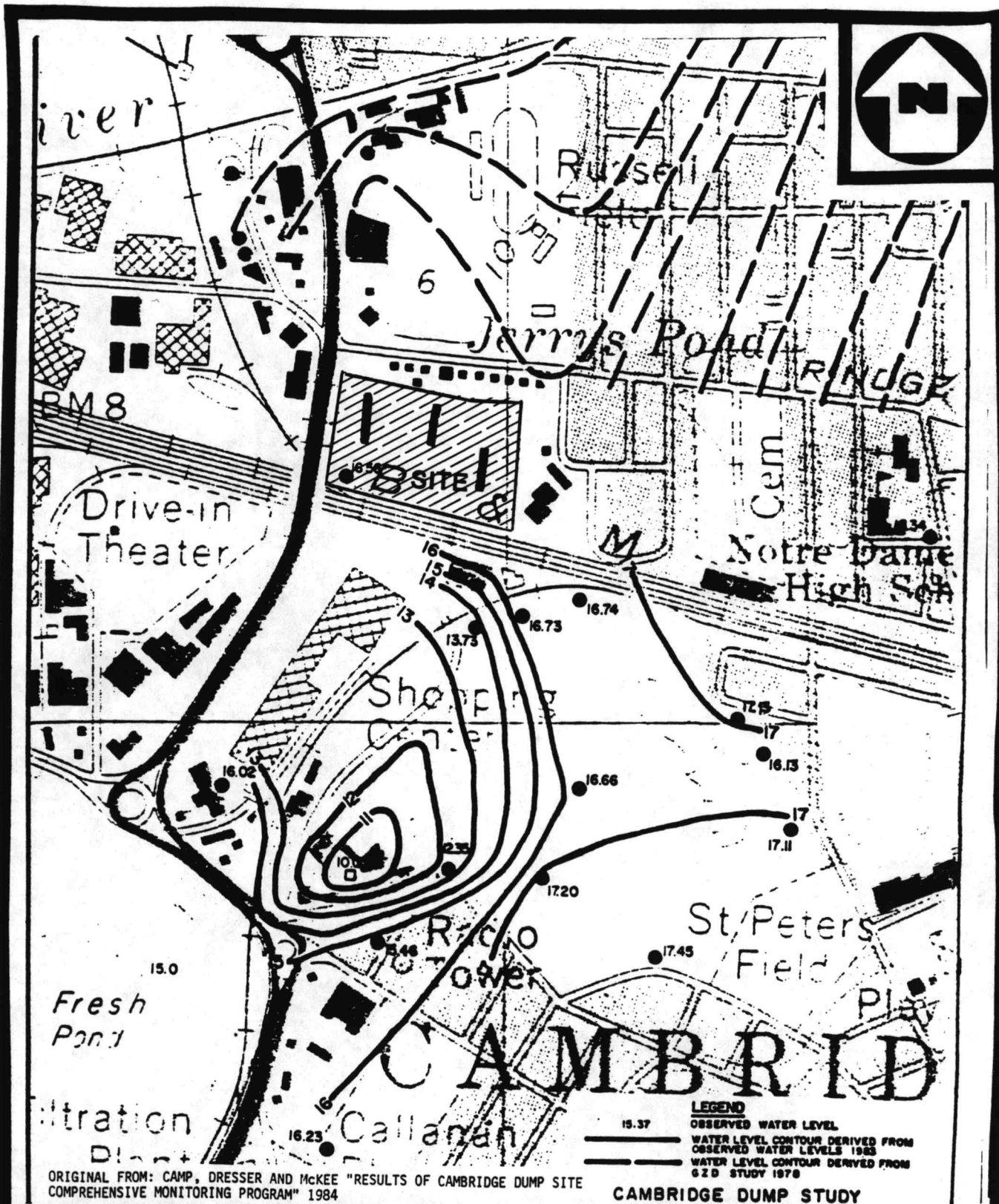
MEMO TO: DON SMITH
SEPTEMBER 16, 1985 - PAGE TWO

portion of the site, including kiln baking of the bricks, brick storage and shipping and perhaps washing of clay prior to its placement in the molds. The clay pit was gradually filled in after 1938 and was completely filled by 1968 or earlier. Records which detailed the types and quantities of fill material used are not available. The dismantling of the brickworks buildings in the southern portion of the site was largely complete by 1955 (10).

The Rindge Towers were constructed during 1968 and 1969, the owner then being Max Wasserman. In 1973-74, two apartments were purchased by Federal Management Company, which has since owned and operated them.

The chief concern of local residents is that potentially hazardous wastes from local chemical and manufacturing businesses may have been disposed in the pit during its filling. If such wastes are present beneath the site, the potential for their migration to both the apartment basements and Fresh Pond exists. Well logs generated during a 1967 subsurface investigation indicate there is up to 41 feet of fill (sand, gravel, wood, bricks and miscellaneous fill) beneath the site (8). In addition, it was determined that the water table is from five to nine feet below the ground surface. It therefore seems very likely that any contaminants on the site would be at or below the water table, increasing the likelihood of contaminant migration. Groundwater flow in the area is not completely understood. Evidence suggests, however, that flow is either to the north or northwest towards Little River/Alewife Brook or towards the New Street Pump Station, 1,500 feet to the south of the site (4,5). Alewife Brook is used by local fisherman and also supports annual herring spawning runs. The Pump Station extracts groundwater and discharges it into the MDC sewer system. This has the effect of locally depressing the water table and intercepting an undetermined percentage of groundwater leaving the site. Figures 2 and 3 indicate local groundwater tables with the surface of Fresh Pond at two different elevations. These maps suggest that with the Pump Station operating properly and with the surface of Fresh Pond maintained above a minimum elevation, groundwater migration from the site to Fresh Pond should be minimal. The operation of the Pump Station may also reduce the groundwater flow from the site to Alewife Brook.

Basements of Rindge Tower Apartments occupy only part of the space beneath the buildings and contain service equipment only. There are no apartments below ground level. It has been alleged that a sump pump in one of the basements runs constantly to remove water which has seeped in. Analysis of a groundwater sample collected from a monitoring well located in the southwest corner of the site in 1985 detected no Hazardous Substance List compounds (9).

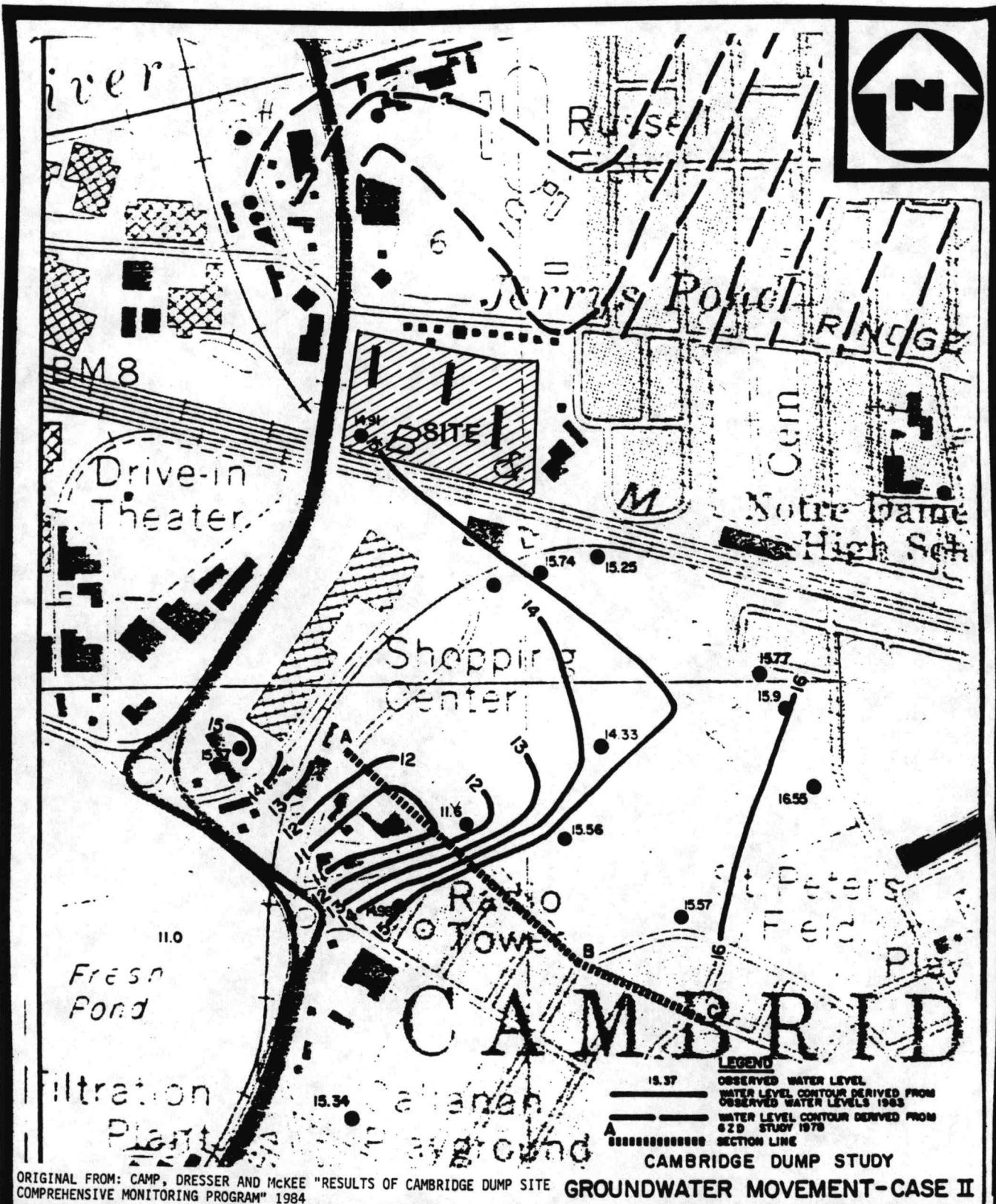


**CAMBRIDGE CLAY PITS
RINDGE TOWER APARTMENTS
CAMBRIDGE, MA**



AUGUST 1985

FIGURE 2



**CAMBRIDGE CLAY PITS
RINDGE TOWER APARTMENTS
CAMBRIDGE, MA**



AUGUST 1985

FIGURE 3

C-583-9-5-44

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NUS/FIT recommends that an abbreviated site inspection of medium priority be performed on the site. This inspection of limited effort should include sampling and analysis of water from the sump pump and sampling of air in the basement for volatile organic compounds utilizing field monitoring equipment. An evaluation of the suitability of the on-site monitoring well and analytical data generated therefrom should be performed. In addition, a further search for historical disposal records should be conducted.

HWC/bjb

cc: R. DiNitto
B. Buckley
T. Plant
M. Mengel
T. Centi/ZPMO

Reviewed and approved by:

Date:


R. DiNitto, RPM
9-16-85

References

1. United States Geological Survey, Lexington, Mass. Quadrangle (7.5' series, 1971).
2. Haley and Aldrich, Inc., Cambridge, MA, "Report on Hazardous Material Site Evaluation, Jefferson Park, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1984 (NUS/FIT Files).
3. Cambridge Historical Commission, "Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge, Northwest Cambridge", 1977.
4. Halberg, H. N. and Roberts, C. M., "Recovery of Groundwater Supplies by Pumping from Watertable Ponds", Transactions, American Geophysical Union, Volume 30, Number 2, April, 1949.
5. Camp, Dresser and McKee, Boston, MA, "Results of Cambridge Dump Site Comprehensive Monitoring Program", 1984.
6. Walter Hoyt, Massachusetts Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreational Vehicle Division, in telecon with Herb Colby, NUS/FIT, June 19, 1985. Telecon #15, NUS/FIT Project File.
7. Joseph DiCarlo, Massachusetts Fisheries, Wildlife and Recreational Vehicle Division, in telecon with Herb Colby, NUS/FIT, August 29, 1985. Telecon #26, NUS/FIT Project File.
8. New England Test Boring Corporation, "Test Boring Reports", for Jaoust Construction Corporation, Cambridge, MA. 1967. NUS/FIT Project File.
9. NUS Corporation, "Analyses Data Report: W. R. Grace, Cambridge, Massachusetts", 1981, NUS/FIT Project Files.
10. United States Environmental Protection Agency, "Historical Analysis Alewife Brook Area, Cambridge, Mass." 1981, NUS/FIT Project Files.
11. Letter to Ms. Debra Prybyla, Office of Public Relations, US EPA, Region I, from Wendy Baruch, North Cambridge Toxic Alert Coalition, Cambridge, MA, December, 1984. NUS/FIT Project File.



POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT
PART 1 - SITE INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT

I. IDENTIFICATION
01 STATE 02 SITE NUMBER
MA MAD981062045

II. SITE NAME AND LOCATION

01 SITE NAME (Legal, common, or descriptive name of site)
Rindge Towers Apartments

02 STREET, ROUTE NO., OR SPECIFIC LOCATION IDENTIFIER
362-364 Rindge Avenue

03 CITY
Cambridge

04 STATE 05 ZIP CODE 06 COUNTY
MA 02138 Middlesex

07 COUNTY CODE 08 CONG DIST
017 08

09 COORDINATES LATITUDE LONGITUDE
42 23 35.6 071 12.4

10 DIRECTIONS TO SITE (Starting from nearest public road)

From Rte 2/Alewife Brook Pkwy traffic circle go south on Alewife Brook Pkwy for 1400 ft. Take left onto Rindge Ave. Rindge Tower Apartments are the predominant tall buildings on the right.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

01 OWNER (if known)
Federal Management Company

02 STREET (Business, mailing, residential)
720 Statler Office Building

03 CITY
Boston

04 STATE 05 ZIP CODE 06 TELEPHONE NUMBER
MA (617) 482-8925

07 OPERATOR (if known and different from owner)

08 STREET (Business, mailing, residential)

09 CITY

10 STATE 11 ZIP CODE 12 TELEPHONE NUMBER
()

13 TYPE OF OWNERSHIP (Check one)
☒ A. PRIVATE ☐ B. FEDERAL ☐ C. STATE ☐ D. COUNTY ☐ E. MUNICIPAL
☐ F. OTHER: (Specify)

14 OWNER/OPERATOR NOTIFICATION ON FILE (Check all that apply)
☐ A. RCRA 3001 DATE RECEIVED: MONTH DAY YEAR ☐ B. UNCONTROLLED WASTE SITE (RCRA 103(c)) DATE RECEIVED: MONTH DAY YEAR ☒ C. NONE

IV. CHARACTERIZATION OF POTENTIAL HAZARD

01 ON SITE INSPECTION
☐ YES DATE MONTH DAY YEAR
☒ NO

BY (Check all that apply)
☐ A. EPA ☐ B. EPA CONTRACTOR ☐ C. STATE ☐ D. OTHER CONTRACTOR
☐ E. LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIAL ☐ F. OTHER: (Specify)

CONTRACTOR NAME(S):

02 SITE STATUS (Check one)
☐ A. ACTIVE ☒ B. INACTIVE ☐ C. UNKNOWN

03 YEARS OF OPERATION
unknown 1968 ☐ UNKNOWN
BEGINNING YEAR ENDING YEAR

04 DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANCES POSSIBLY PRESENT, KNOWN, OR ALLEGED

Photographic evidence suggests dumping of unknown material may have occurred at this former clay pit site. There is concern that hazardous wastes from local chemical battery and other manufacturing operations may have been disposed of on the site.

05 DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL HAZARD TO ENVIRONMENT AND POPULATION

The potential for the migration of contaminated groundwater to Fresh Pond (0.4 miles south) Jerry's Pond (200 ft north) and Alewife Brook (0.35 miles north) exists. Potentially contaminated groundwater may enter apartment basements and allow for direct contact.

V. PRIORITY ASSESSMENT

01 PRIORITY FOR INSPECTION (Check one. If high or medium is checked, complete Part 2 - Waste Information and Part 3 - Description of Hazardous Conditions and Incidents)
☐ A. HIGH (Inspection required promptly) ☒ B. MEDIUM (Inspection required) ☐ C. LOW (Inspect on time available basis) ☐ D. NONE (No further action needed, complete current disposition form)

VI. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM

01 CONTACT
Susan Svirskey

02 OF (Agency, Organization)
US EPA, Region I

03 TELEPHONE NUMBER
617 223-0808

04 PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSESSMENT
Herb Colby

05 AGENCY
FII

06 ORGANIZATION
NUS Corp.

07 TELEPHONE NUMBER
617 275-2970

08 DATE
6 24 85
MONTH DAY YEAR



01 STATE MA	02 SITE NUMBER MAD981062045
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01 PHYSICAL STATES (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ A. SOLID
☐ B. POWDER, FINES
☐ C. SLUDGE
☒ D. OTHER
☐ E. SLURRY
☐ F. LIQUID
☐ G. GAS
 unknown

02 WASTE QUANTITY AT SITE

(Measures of waste quantities must be independent)

TONS

CUBIC YARDS 81,600*

NO OF DRUMS

03 WASTE CHARACTERISTICS (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| - A. TOXIC | - E SOLUBLE | - I HIGHLY VOLATILE |
| - B. CORROSIVE | - F INFECTIOUS | - J EXPLOSIVE |
| - C RADIOACTIVE | - G. FLAMMABLE | - K REACTIVE |
| - D PERSISTENT | - H IGNITABLE | - L INCOMPATIBLE |
| | | - M NOT APPLICABLE |

unknown

III. WASTE TYPE

CATEGORY	SUBSTANCE NAME	01 GROSS AMOUNT	02 UNIT OF MEASURE	03 COMMENTS
SLU	SLUDGE			
OLW	ONLY WASTE			
SOL	SOLVENTS			
PSD	PESTICIDES			
OCG	OTHER ORGANIC CHEMICALS			
IOC	INORGANIC CHEMICALS			
ACD	ACIDS			
BAS	BASES			
MES	HEAVY METALS			

IV. HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (See Appendix for most frequently used CAS Numbers)

[illegible]

V. FEEDSTOCKS (See Appendix for CAS Numbers)

CATEGORY	01 FEEDSTOCK NAME	02 CAS NUMBER	CATEGORY	01 FEEDSTOCK NAME	02 CAS NUMBER
FDS			FDS		
FDS			FDS		
FDS			FDS		
FDS			FDS		

VI. SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cite specific references, e.g., state files, sample analyses, reports.)

* Estimated from area of site (144,347 sq. ft.) and estimated depth of 10 ft. of original depth.



POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

PART 3 - DESCRIPTION OF HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

I. IDENTIFICATION

01 STATE MA 02 SITE NUMBER MAD981062045

II. HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

01 ☒ A. GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION unknown 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☒ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: Groundwater may be contaminated by migration of suspected hazardous materials. Contaminated groundwater may travel to Fresh Pond, which 95,000 people use as water supply. Potentially contaminated groundwater entering the buildings basements present a health hazard. 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☒ B. SURFACE WATER CONTAMINATION unknown 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☒ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: Although unlikely, potentially contaminated runoff from the site could enter Jerry's Pond. 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☐ C. CONTAMINATION OF AIR 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____ 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☐ D. FIRE/EXPLOSIVE CONDITIONS 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____ 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☐ E. DIRECT CONTACT 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____ 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☒ F. CONTAMINATION OF SOIL 5.1 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☒ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 AREA POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: (Acres) The soil underneath the site may be contaminated by material dumped previously at site. 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☒ G. DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION 95,000 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☒ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The potential for contamination of Fresh Pond by groundwater (potentially contaminated) exists. 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☐ H. WORKER EXPOSURE/INJURY 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 WORKERS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____ 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☒ I. POPULATION EXPOSURE/INJURY 95,000 02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☒ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED
03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The principal exposure routes are through potential contamination of Fresh Pond, (Cambridge's water supply), and contact with contaminated groundwater entering the apartment basements. 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION



POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT
PART 3 - DESCRIPTION OF HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

I. IDENTIFICATION

01 STATE 02 SITE NUMBER
MA MAD981062045

II. HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS (Continued)

01 ☐ J. DAMAGE TO FLORA
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ K. DAMAGE TO FAUNA
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (include name(s) of species)

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

Contaminated groundwater may flow towards Alewife Brook which supports various freshwater fish and an annual herring spawning run.

01 ☐ L. CONTAMINATION OF FOOD CHAIN
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

Potentially contaminated fish from Alewife Brook may be eaten by local fishermen.

01 ☐ M. UNSTABLE CONTAINMENT OF WASTES
(Spills/runoff/standing liquids/leaking drums)

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: unknown 04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The area may have been used as a dump for an undetermined number of years. There were no known provisions for containment of wastes.

01 ☐ N. DAMAGE TO OFFSITE PROPERTY
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ O. CONTAMINATION OF SEWERS, STORM DRAINS, WWTPs
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ P. ILLEGAL/UNAUTHORIZED DUMPING
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____) ☐ POTENTIAL ☐ ALLEGED

05 DESCRIPTION OF ANY OTHER KNOWN, POTENTIAL, OR ALLEGED HAZARDS

III. TOTAL POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: 95,000

IV. COMMENTS

Photographic documentation indicates dumping of unknown materials and quantities for at least 16 years. The principal potential receptors include the Fresh Pond reservoir, Jerry's Pond, and those people that use the apartment basements.

V. SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cite specific references, e. g., state files, sample analysis, reports)

1. "Historical Analysis, Alewife Brook Area, Cambridge, MA", US EPA, NUS/FIT Proj. File